

A STROLL THROUGH THE HISTORY OF SAMOTER

The first edition of Samoter was held in 1964. It was a major gamble, since the event was set up to present earth moving machinery that until then had been an integral part of Fieragricola (as of 1948). This proved to be a vital decision and one especially in line with the needs of the many small-medium companies for a specialist event for exchange, promotion and comparison with various technical experiences and the research and university world.

Samoter that year was the only international show in the field and a precious occasion for companies in the sector, which at last found a specific event for their products and the occasion for development that, over time, helped promote both economic and social progress.

In 1964, Italy completed that "economic miracle" that in the immediate post-war period had transformed a prevalently agricultural country into an industrial nation. On 4 October the President of the Republic, Antonio Segni, inaugurated the completion of the "Autostrada del Sole" - the motorway from Milan to Naples and symbol of the new times. Milan saw the first Metro line come into service, while the Italian Song Festival in Sanremo was won by Gigliola Cinguetti with "Non ho l'Età". Italy was a young country firmly looking to forwards, in a world where information technology was taking its first steps (the Basic programming language appeared in the same year) but at the same time was also shaken by the escalation of the Vietnam war and when young people, fascinated by the Beatles and the Rolling Stones, began their "protest against the system" that exploded a few years later.

Samoter, in the meantime, followed up the needs of a fast-growing market by extending trade sectors at the exhibition: earth moving machinery was joined by various other fields in the building and construction industry.

In 1971, the event joined the UFI (Union des Foires Internationales), the organism that brings together the organisers of major international exhibition events, and two years later launched the first in a series of prestigious awards assigned to public and private companies and countries particularly distinguished in design, major public works or the development of advanced technologies.

1973 saw the creation of the International Technical Innovation Competition, the Award that quickly emerged as one of the most qualified and selective "showcases" of the technical and technological evolution on show at the Exhibition which celebrated its twentieth edition in 2011.

At the end of the 1970s, the sector had to tackle a difficult market situation: demand for technological products shrank alongside the fall in major new works. The recession in this sector lasted until the early 1980s. As a result, many well-known brands disappeared from the

entrepreneurial panorama, while others - through national and international alliances - found ways to compete even more efficiently on markets.

The Exhibition - after in-depth analysis with trade organisations - modified its calendar in this period to become a biennial rather than an annual show, thus allowing companies to programme their investments and product presentations in a more effective manner.

The Verona Exhibition Authority increasingly focused the event on the real needs of companies. The 1980s and the early 1990s were very intense years: the globalisation of markets imposed new approaches, continual innovation and promotion.

In 1993, the exhibition became a triennial event, following an alternation agreement with the leading international shows - Intermat in Paris and Bauma in Munich - that further strengthened the brand and expanded coverage of the sector by including other emerging segments in the field: tunnelling, rental-hire, distribution, technical-scientific projects and research.

1993 was also the year when Samoter joined the cycle of European exhibitions patronised by CECE, the Committee grouping the associations of earth moving machinery and building plant manufacturers.

In 2002, the Exhibition celebrated its 25th edition with 948 exhibitors from 31 countries and attendance by almost 90 thousand visitors (89,241) from 90 countries. Net exhibition area leaped to 94,388 square metres.

The last two editions were equally hallmarked by the continuity of such success: in particular, the 2008 edition attracted 1,026 exhibitors (30.70% international from 36 countries) over a net exhibition area of 131,156 square metres and 106,857 visitors.

The result as regards visitor profiles is particularly significant since a there is large majority of decision-makers (delegated managers, directors, company managers, buyers) that fully reflects the growth of the event in terms of quality.

There was also a net increase compared to previous editions in attendance by Italian and international journalists, as well as international visibility with 50 Italian and international media partners and 692 articles published worldwide.

The event in 2011 - with more than 900 exhibitors and almost 100 thousand visitors - confirmed the absolute calibre of Samoter in the international panorama notwithstanding the immensely difficult moment for the economy in global terms and the construction sector in particular. The crisis consequently had a major impact on the earth moving and construction machinery field and inevitably required a review of activities that all the exhibitions perform for companies in the field. In this regard, Samoter has for some years strengthened its role as a partner for companies, especially as regards internationalisation, by developing a series of initiatives not merely limited to the development of exhibition event as such but also and especially to accompanying companies over the three years between one edition and the next. Among such initiatives, special mention can be made of Samoter Tour, a travelling initiative helping to support internationalisation processes by small-medium businesses with a focus on b2b presentations and business meetings that in recent years has involved Bulgaria, Poland, Russia and Rumania. In parallel, the exhibition has also grasped the need expressed by visitors and exhibitors for a more interactive and dynamic exhibition highlighting demo areas where it is possible to see and test the machinery on show in the main exhibition.

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